



## SPRING.....ONCE AGAIN!!

By Ron C. Cross,  
Board of Commission Chairman

Is it not amazing that we wait and wait for spring and then all of a sudden it is here, and it does not seem so long a wait after all?

Well, this arrival of spring brings with it more good news for Columbia County. Congratulations are very much in order for Lewis Foster, his IT Staff, and Deputy County Administrator Scott Johnson for receiving a stimulus grant for broadband expansion throughout Columbia County. You can read the details and see the other parties involved later in this mailer, but this is huge for the County. Not only will the "middle mile" routing of fiber-optic cable and five new towers allow internet service to all areas of the county, it will provide a new revenue source by leasing broadband space to multiple internet, telephone, and data providers. In this era of budget cuts, a new source of revenue is extremely important, and Columbia County is one of only three in the state to receive these grants to date. Please read the full article and if you have any questions, call the County at your convenience.

Have you noticed the resumption of work at Washington Rd. and Hallali Farm Road? How about the beginning of intersection improvements along flowing Wells Road? These projects should be completed this spring and several repaving projects will begin. Final design is almost complete for the Evans Towne Park and bids should be taken by early summer. The addition to Building C is out for rebid, and we expect a contract on that project by May. There are multiple road and water projects yet to be bid, and the County is extremely busy with inquiries about additions to the Gateway Project on Lewiston Road and other private commercial projects. We should be able to release some details by the next mailer. As I have stated multiple times,

thanks to you the voters, Columbia County creates its own stimulus and is also able to secure additional stimulus from other sources. We are very fortunate.

Hope you have a great Masters and wonderful spring!!



## Family Earth Fest 2010

# May 1st 10AM-2PM

## Columbia County Amphitheater

**Featuring a Raptor Flight Show**  
**12PM on the Amphitheater Stage!**

presented by The Center for Wildlife Education and  
the Lamar Q. Ball, Jr. Raptor Center at  
Georgia Southern University

**Due to the risk of frightening or injury to the birds, pets will not be allowed at Earthfest. We apologize for this inconvenience and thank you for your cooperation!**

SPONSORED BY:



**Summit Green Solutions**  
Go Green Today... Save Green Tomorrow.

Kid's activities  
"Green" vendors  
Butterfly release

Games  
Art contest  
Demonstrations

Inflatables  
Arts & crafts  
and much more!







**For information, call (706) 312-7195 or visit [www.columbiacountyga.gov](http://www.columbiacountyga.gov)**



On March 2, 2010, Columbia County received a stimulus grant to fund 75% of an \$18 million county-wide broadband project. This fiber optic infrastructure utilizes light to transfer information – making it the fastest communication technology on the planet. This project will greatly increase accessibility to the homes and businesses in the County and will literally make us leaders in technology.

**How fast is “fast”?** Fiber optic technology will allow your service provider to download information up to 100 times faster if you are currently using dial up. It will also allow Columbia County to increase the speed at which critical community organizations such as schools and libraries can download information (e.g., it will take less than 5 minutes to download a full-length movie). It is also powerful enough for “real time” video conferencing, HDTV, and all types of voice, data, audio, and video communications. It will be a combination of blistering speed, high capacity, and sharpest image quality.

**Will I get my cable service through the County?** No. This is a “middle mile” project which means the County will install, maintain, and manage a 200-mile fiber “backbone,” and service providers will lease broadband space from the County and provide the link from the County’s infrastructure to homes and businesses.

**This sounds great!** When will it start? Whoa! This is a 2 ½ year project, but installation of fiber optic cable and tower will start this year.

**Are my property taxes going to this project?** No. The County’s 25% contribution will come from already collected SPLOST funds (i.e., 1¢ sales tax) that are received any time anyone buys a commodity in the County. Once this project is completed, it will be self-sufficient.

**What exactly will be done?** The County will install 200 miles of fiber optic cable and five wireless towers. (Please see map on right.) Free WiFi will be available at County recreation parks, libraries, community centers, and all County facilities, schools, water system, and traffic signals will be connected.



#### **What will this mean to Columbia County?**

The benefits are far-reaching and multi-faceted.

- *Business* – Attract and retain businesses especially those with very high bandwidth needs such as digital media, software development, and e-commerce.
- *Education* - Allow competition with the global economy by workforce education and telecommuting. All our public schools will be linked and incorporate this technology into the classroom.



- *Emergency response* - Enable law enforcement, fire departments, emergency medical, emergency management, and public health to respond more quickly to critical situations.
- *Traffic* - Integrate all components of road travel to decrease travel time, increase travel speed, and reduce fuel consumption, accidents, and vehicle emissions.
- *Water and Sewer* - Monitor and maintain daily operations of the Water Utility.
- *Communications* - Facilitate two-way high speed communication and video conferencing as well as affordable broadband access to community groups, students, and the elderly and increase citizen participation in civic life.



- **Health care** - Initiate interactive monitoring between health professionals and patients.
- **Revenue** - Provide total funding for the maintenance and management of the fiber optic infrastructure.

For more information, please check the County's website ([www.columbiacountyga.gov](http://www.columbiacountyga.gov)), watch for updates in your water bill inserts, or call Marilyn Heuer at 706-868-3359.

Columbia County Arts presents:

# Art in the Park 2010

**Saturday, April 17**  
**10 AM – 5 PM**

**Memorial Garden and Amphitheater  
(adjacent to the Columbia County Library)**

Artists will showcase their talents at *Art in the Park 2010*, a festival highlighting the visual and performing arts in Columbia County. This year's event will include performances by several local arts groups and performers, a variety of arts vendors, an artist demonstration tent where you can see how artwork is created, lots of activities for the kids, delicious food, and our second annual sidewalk chalk contest. Registration for the sidewalk chalk contest is \$10 and begins at 10am. Judging begins at 4pm. **The event is FREE and open to the public.**

For more information visit [www.columbiacountyarts.org](http://www.columbiacountyarts.org) or email [info@columbiacountyarts.org](mailto:info@columbiacountyarts.org).



Holy Trinity Greek  
Orthodox Church



# BLUES BBQ Brews

**7:00 PM @ THE COLUMBIA COUNTY  
AMPHITHEATER**

**Come hear great Blues Music and enjoy**  
**SSQ, Sact and Yolo**  
**from local businesses.**  
**Admission: \$3/person**  
**706-312-7192**

**April 16** 🎵 Tommy OD and The Survivors  
**April 23** 🎵 The Lemonsqueezers  
**April 30** 🎵 The Liz Melendez Band

**SPONSORS:** UNIVERSITY HEALTH CARE SYSTEM, Columbia County, Comcast, Arts Council, GRASSROOTS ARTS PROGRAM, HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH, QUEENSBOROUGH, WALSH BROTHER GROUP INC.

# Community Calendar & Announcements

## APRIL

- 1 *Nurturing Nature Walks* for 3-5 year olds at Reed Creek Park from 4:30 – 5:30 PM. Children must be accompanied by an adult. \$2 fee per child for non-members.
- 3 *Pond Exploration* at Reed Creek Park from 10 – 11 AM. Children will learn about critters in the Reed Creek pond. Be prepared to get wet. Children aged 5+ must be accompanied by an adult and pre-registration required by calling 706-210-4027. \$2 fee per child for non-members.  
*Job Searching for Teens* at the Evans Library at 1 PM. Learn how to write a resume, find a job, and interview techniques to land a job this summer! Register by calling 706-447-7660.
- 9 *All About Frogs* at Reed Creek Park for ages 5+ from 8:30 – 9:30 PM. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Call 706-210-4027 to register. Free.
- 10 *Creek Clay and Swamp Muck* for ages 5+ from 10 – 11 AM at Reed Creek Park. Pre-register by calling 706-210-4027 and get ready to get muddy! \$2 fee per child for non-members.
- 12-16 On-line early registration for summer co-ed basketball for youth 10-16. Youth must have previously played a sport with the Recreation Department to register on-line at [www.columbiacountyga.gov](http://www.columbiacountyga.gov).
- 14 *PCs for Beginners* – covers computer basics such as mousing, computer vocabulary, and basic programs at 10 AM at the Evans Library. Register in person at the Evans Reference Desk.  
*Gardening at Lunch Series* at the Evans Library from 12:10-12:45 PM. This month County Extension Agent Charles Phillips will discuss Insect & Disease Control in Vegetable Gardens. Bring a lunch and a friend!
- 15 *Brown Bag Lunch Book Discussion* at 11:30 AM in the Evans Library. The Gargoyle by Andrew David will be discussed.
- 16 *Insect Investigations* with bug nets at Reed Creek Park from 5-6 PM for ages 5+. Pre-register by calling 706-210-4027 and get ready to get muddy! \$2 fee per child for non-members.  
*Spring After-Hours* at 6:30 PM feature family-friendly games, crafts, activities, and stories at the Evans Library. Register by calling 706-447-7657.
- 17 *Turtles are Terrific* with Jeff Miles at Reed Creek Park from 11 AM-noon. -register by calling 706-210-4027. Free.  
*Spend an Evening with The Dixie Divas* – Georgia authors Patricia Sprinkle, Karin Gillespie, J.L. Miles, and Julie Cannon - in the Performing Arts Center at 7 PM. Doors will open at 6:30 PM for this uproarious evening of Dixie shenanigans. Call 706-863-1946 for more information.
- 18 *Sunday Game Day* from 2-5 PM at the Evans Library. Join us for a variety of family-friendly board games – Scrabble, chess, checkers and more – or bring your own!
- 19 Registration begins (and ends May 7th) for summer co-ed basketball for youth 10-16. The season is May 25th – July 2nd. Mail-in registrations must be postmarked by May 7th. Youth must have previously played a sport with the Recreation Department to register on-line at [www.columbiacountyga.gov](http://www.columbiacountyga.gov).  
*Monday Night Book Discussion* on *The Help* by Katherine Stockett at 6:30 PM at the Evans Library.
- 20 *Pond Exploration* at Reed Creek Park from 4:30-5:30 PM. Children will learn about critters in the Reed Creek pond. Be prepared to get wet. Children aged 5+ must be accompanied by an adult and pre-registration required by calling 706-210-4027. \$2 fee per child for non-members.
- 21 *Nurturing Nature Walks* for 3-5 year olds at Reed Creek Park from 10-11 AM. Children must be accompanied by an adult. \$2 fee per child for non-members.
- Intro to the Internet* – learn how to surf the web with ease at 10 AM at the Evans Library. Register in person at the Evans Reference Desk.
- 22 *Internet Job Searching* – learn how to search and apply for positions online at 2 PM at the Evans Library. Please bring a current resume on a flash drive or disk. Register in person at the Evans Reference Desk.  
*Nurturing Nature Walks* for 3-5 year olds at Reed Creek Park from 4:30 – 5:30. Children must be accompanied by an adult. \$2 fee per child for non-members.
- 23 *All About Frogs* at Reed Creek Park for ages 5+ from 8:30 – 9:30 PM. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Call 706-210-4027 to register. Free.
- 24 *DDD Science Hour* at 11 AM at the Evans Library. Join us for fun science activities featured in the *Dangerous Book for Boys* and the *Daring Book for Girls*. Register by calling 706-447-7660.  
*National Day of Service* food drive for the Golden Harvest Food Bank. Look for notices in your neighborhood!
- 28 *Intro to E-mail* – create an e-mail account and practice sending e-mails at 10 AM at the Evans Library. Register in person at the Evans Reference Desk.
- 29 *Nurturing Nature Walks* for 3-5 year olds at Reed Creek Park from 10-11 AM. Children must be accompanied by an adult. \$2 fee per child for non-members.  
eAudiobooks – learn how to download and listen to eAudiobooks on a variety of electronic devices at the Evans Library at 2 PM. Register in person at the Evans Reference Desk.
- 30 *Arbor Day 2010* at Reed Creek Park at 11 AM. Also sponsored by *Keep Columbia County Beautiful and Natural Awakenings*. Call 706-312-7195 for more info.  
*Insect Investigations* with bug nets at Reed Creek Park from 5-6 PM for ages 5+. Pre-register by calling 706-210-4027 and get ready to get muddy! \$2 fee per child for non-members.
- 30-2 *2010 U.S. Masters Disc Golf Championship* 10 AM – 5 PM at Wildwood Park will feature 150 professional and amateur players 40 years and older. First 100 spectators each day will receive a free golf disc and the opportunity to play a round of disc golf. For more information, please call 706-261-6342.
- May 1 *Family Earth Fest* at the Amphitheater from 10 AM – 2 PM featuring a Raptor Flight Show at noon. Other activities include butterfly release, games, art contest, demonstrations, inflatables, arts & crafts and more! PETS WILL NOT BE ALLOWED AT EARTH FEST. Also sponsored by *Natural Awakenings, GA Power, The Greenway Store, Augusta Deal\$, and Keep Columbia County Beautiful*. Call 706-312-7195 for more info.  
*2nd Annual CSRA RV & Boat Show* at the Wildwood Park mega-ramp parking lot from noon to 5 PM. Gift certificates for the first 100 people and food, inflatables, and fun for the entire family! A bike and car show as well as boats, RV's, personal watercraft, and outdoor equipment. Call 706-541-0586 for more information.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

- April 5th – 9th is Family Week at the Evans Library. Come to the Children's areas for family-friendly activities, crafts, and games. Call 706-447-7657 for more information.
- *Area Artwork Displays* - The Evans Library is displaying beautiful quilts by the Quilter's Guild in Evans.
- AARP volunteers will be preparing tax returns free of charge for the elderly and low income citizens in Columbia County at the Evans and Euchee Creek (Grovettown) Libraries until April 15th. For more information, please contact Jim Roberts at 706-860-6430, call toll free: 1-888-AARPNOW (1-888-227-7669), or view the AARP website at [www.aarp.org/taxaide](http://www.aarp.org/taxaide).